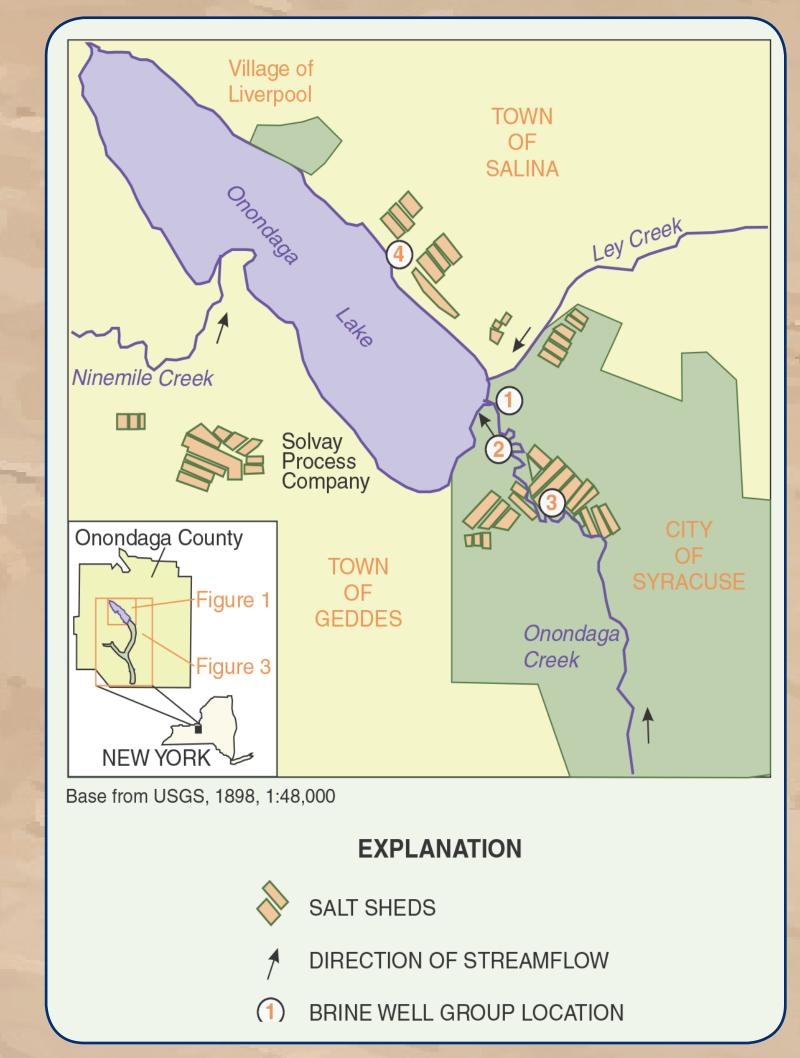
Salt Production in Central New York

c.1820 - 1890

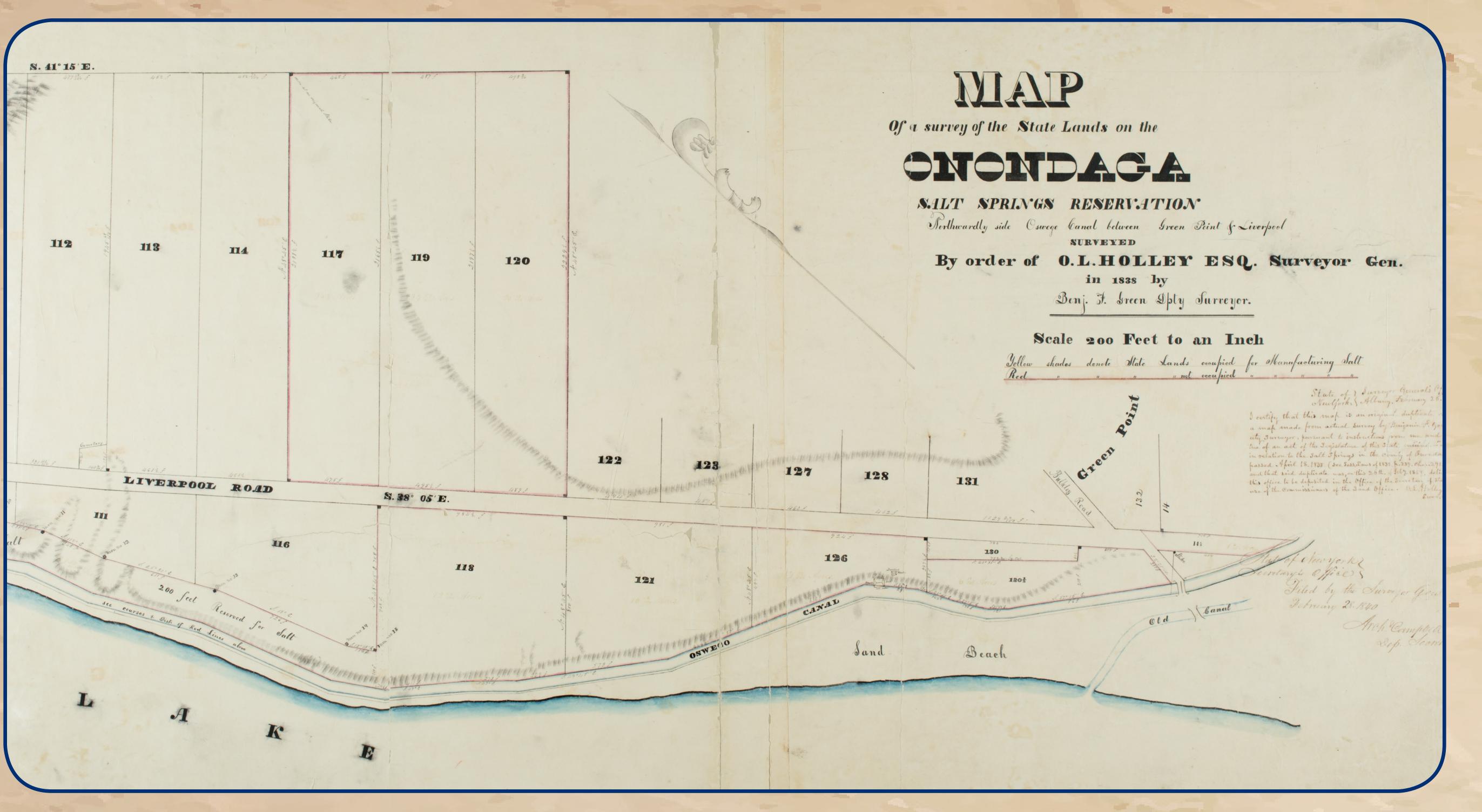
For over a century, Central New York was the hub for the production of salt in the United States. The rapid rise of the salt industry in Syracuse led to the nickname "The Salt City." By 1900, salt production had declined due to competition and the exhaustion of concentrated salt brine in and around Onondaga Lake.

Early Salt Production c. 1790s



Location of the salt brine well groups: 1-Salina Group; 2-Geddes Group; 3-Syracuse Group; 4-Liverpool Group.

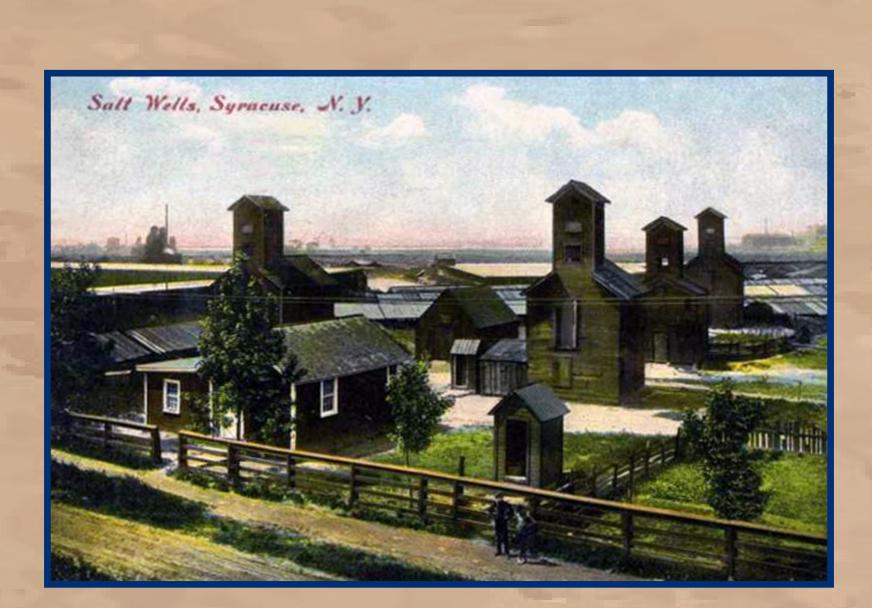
Credit: U.S. Geological Survey
Department of the Interior/USGS



In 1797 the New York State Legislature created the Onondaga Salt Springs Reservation, a 1 mile-wide strip on the shores of Onondaga Lake for the purpose of producing salt for common use. Salt production was regulated by law, including methods of production, storage, and sale.

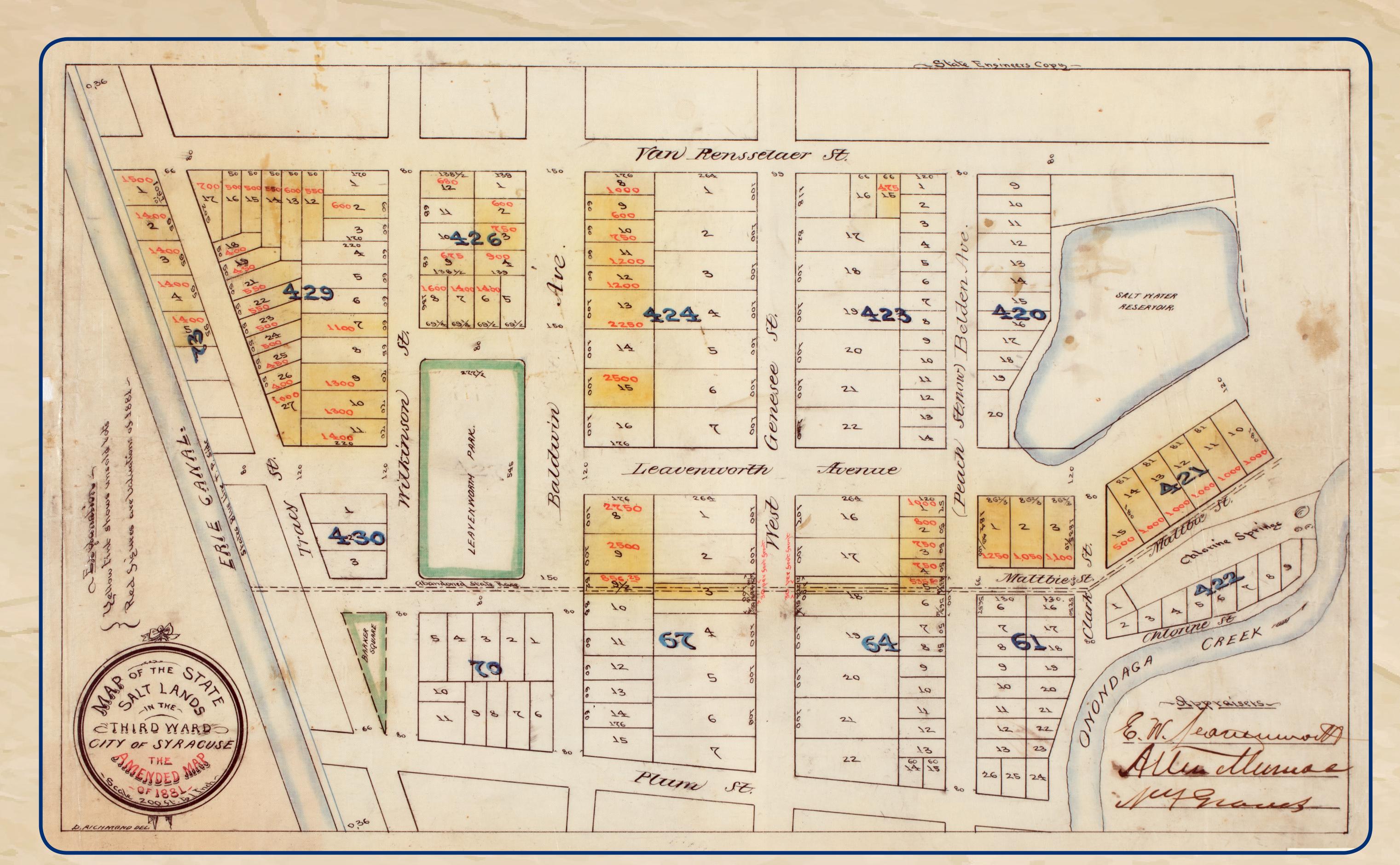


Solar evaporation became the most cost-effective way to harvest salt from brine water. The brine was pumped into chambers where impurities settled out and then pumped into 3-inch deep wooden trays referred to as salt vats or salt covers. The entire process took about seven days.



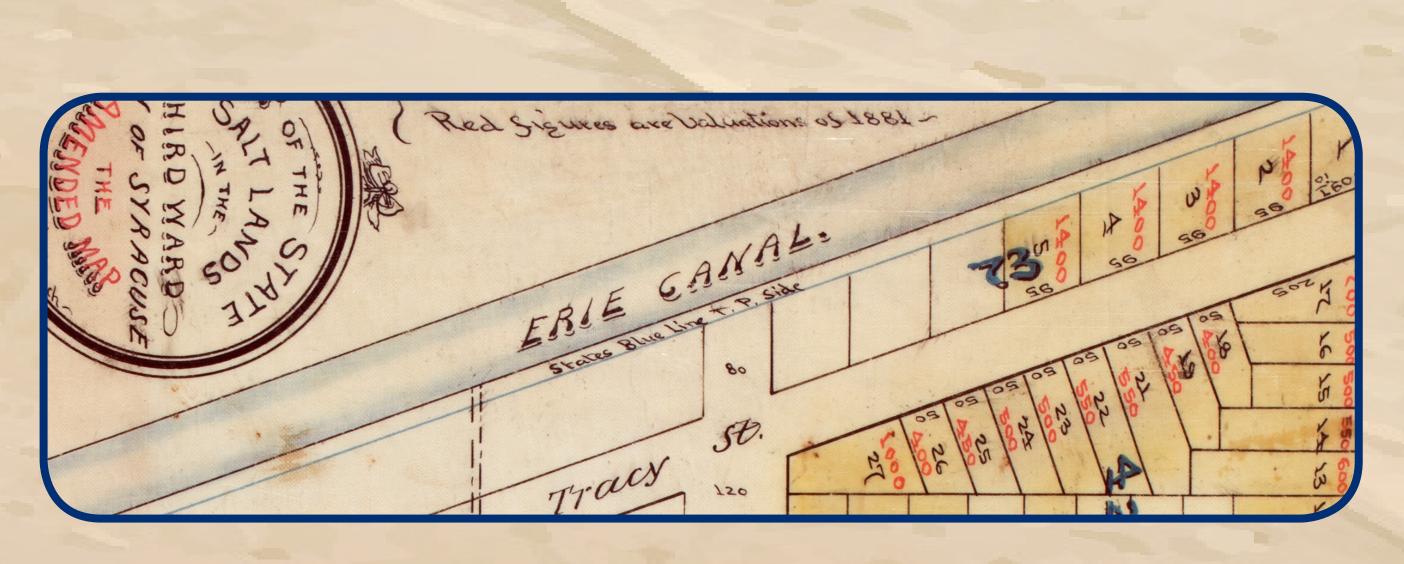
By the 1840s, many of the shallow salt water wells had been depleted and the state authorized the drilling of deep wells to harvest salt brine. Some were as deep as 1,200 feet.

"The Salt City" - Syracuse



Salt lots were managed by New York State and were sold or leased to individual salt producers for the purpose of digging or drilling wells to harvest salt brine.





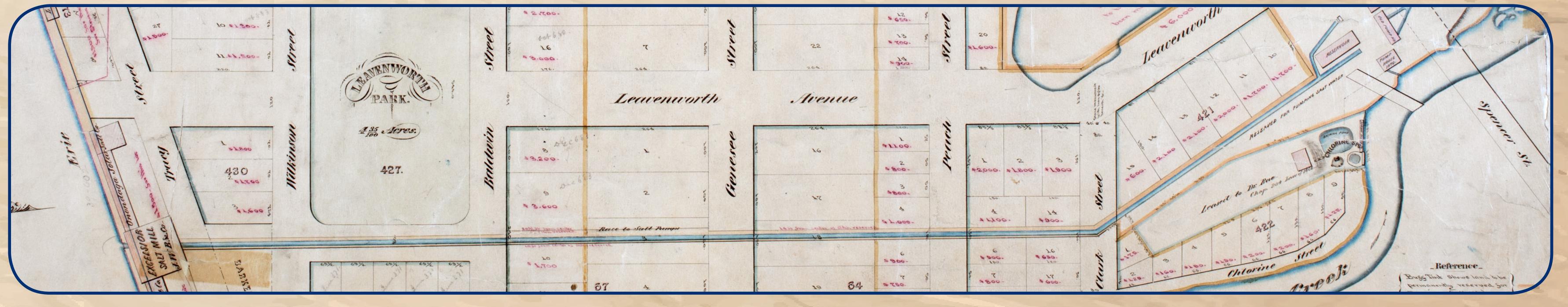


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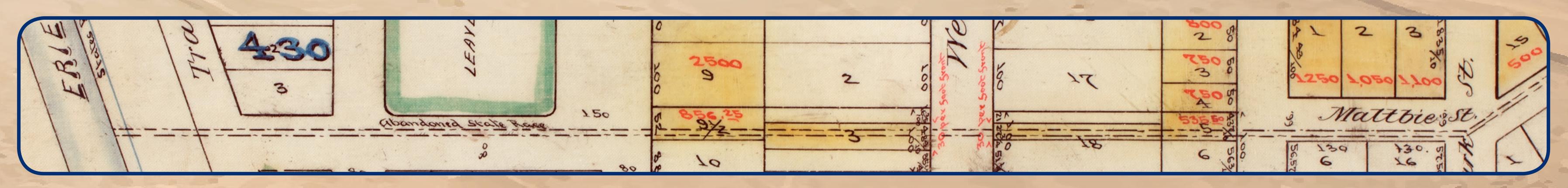
SALTWATS

"South of Erie Canal and East of West St".

The Erie Canal fueled the rapid growth of the salt industry by allowing salt to be transported to markets in New York City, Chicago, and beyond.



Salt water obtained from deep salt wells and stored in the salt reservoir was pumped along a raceway through Syracuse's Third Ward to the Erie Canal where it was processed into bushels of salt for transportation and sale across the country.



By 1881, the old raceway in Syracuse had been abandoned as salt production declined and shifted to the towns of Salina and Geddes.